The Small Catechism

For Printing at Home

By Martin Luther

Edited by Luke Smith

The Small Catechism: For Printing at Home

2026, Luke Smith

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Introduction

This edition of *The Small Catechism* is tailor-made for printing at home. It is firmly in the spirit of this work to allow anyone with the necessary means to reproduce this work free of cost and restriction of adaptation. Luther's catechism is a short work, making this very feasible; in fact, it makes it surprising that this has not been done before as far as I am aware. A few features were chosen to lend this edition to this goal. The main one is, however, that the page size is a quarter of a US Letter sheet. This means it may be printed efficiently with no wasted paper.

The majority of the present text is the 1994 English translation done by Rev. Robert E. Smith for Project Wittenberg. Some minor spelling and grammatical changes have been made, yet it must be stressed that

its great advantage over any other translation, which there are many of, is that Smith dedicated it to the public domain, allowing for its use and ministry here. I give glory to God for his work of the Holy Spirit!

Yet Smith has not translated Luther's preface or the second appendix, otherwise known as "The Table of Duties." These have therefore been adapted from *Concordia Triglotta*, the 1921 publication of the Book of Concord by Concordia Publishing House. I have updated the archaic endings on verbs and have modified some grammar to create easier reading. This text was translated from German and therefore any text which appears in brackets is an alternative reading from the Latin publications.

Finally, it should be mentioned that this edition of *The Small Catechism* is dedicated to the public domain so that the Gospel is unhindered by the

reciprocity that compromises ministry. You may adapt, translate, and distribute this work free of charge to any ministerial needs that may arise. I pray that if this Biblical teaching is unfamiliar to you that you will start your investigation with *The Dorean Principle* by Conley Owens[1] and the website SellingJesus.org. Owens in his book and SellingJesus with its articles succinctly lay out the principle to freely give as taught by Jesus and practiced by the apostle Paul.

May God bless your reading of this catechism whether you are a veteran Christian ready for "masterly turns" or a beginner ready to "taste and see that the Lord is good."

[1] This work may be read or ordered for free at thedoreanprinciple.org/

Martin Luther's Preface

Martin Luther to All Faithful and Godly Pastors and Preachers: Grace, Mercy, and Peace in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare [publish] this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Good God! What manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas! many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach [so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it]. Nevertheless, all maintain that they are Christians, have been baptized and receive the [common] holy Sacraments. Yet they [do not understand and] cannot [even] recite either the

Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs; and yet, now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse all liberty like experts.

O you bishops! [to whom this charge has been committed by God,] what will you ever answer to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people and never for a moment discharged your office? [You are the persons to whom alone this ruin of the Christian religion is due. You have permitted men to err so shamefully; yours is the guilt; for you have always done anything other than what your office required you to do.] May all misfortune flee you! [I do not wish at this place to invoke evil on your heads.] You command the Sacrament in one form [but is not this the highest ungodliness coupled with the greatest impudence that you are insisting on the

administration of the Sacrament in one form only, and on your traditions] and insist on your human laws, and yet at the same time you do not care in the least [while you are utterly without scruple and concern] whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of the Word of God. Woe, woe, unto you forever!

Therefore I entreat [and adjure] you all for God's sake, my dear sirs and brethren, who are pastors or preachers, to devote yourselves heartily to your office, to have pity on the people who are entrusted to you, and to help us inculcate the Catechism upon the people, and especially upon the young. And let those of you who cannot do better [if any of you are so unskilled that you have absolutely no knowledge of these matters, let them not be ashamed to] take these

tables and forms and impress them, word for word, on the people, as follows:

In the first place, let the preacher above all be careful to avoid many kinds of or various texts and forms of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, etc., but choose one form to which he adheres, and which he inculcates all the time, year after year. For [I give this advice, however, because I know that] young and simple people must be taught by uniform, settled texts and forms, otherwise they easily become confused when the teacher today teaches them thus, and in a year some other way, as if he wished to make improvements, and thus all effort and labor [which has been expended in teaching] is lost.

Also our blessed fathers understood this well; for they all used the same form of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. Therefore we,

too, should [imitate their diligence and be at pains to] teach the young and simple people these parts in such a way as not to change a syllable, or set them forth and repeat them one year differently than in another [no matter how often we teach the Catechism].

Hence, choose whatever form you please, and adhere to it forever. But when you preach in the presence of learned and intelligent men, you may exhibit your skill, and may present these parts in as varied and intricate ways and give them as masterly turns as you are able. But with the young people stick to one fixed, permanent form and manner, and teach them, first of all, these parts, namely, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc., according to the text, word for word, so that they, too, can repeat it in the same manner after you and commit it to memory.

But those who are unwilling to learn it should be told that they deny Christ and are no Christians, neither should they be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at baptism, nor exercise any part of Christian liberty, but should simply be turned back to the Pope and his officials, yes, to the devil himself. Moreover, their parents and employers should refuse them food and drink, and [they would also do well if they were to] notify them that the prince will drive such rude people from the country, etc.

For although we cannot and should not force any one to believe, yet we should insist and urge the people that they know what is right and wrong with those among whom they dwell and wish to make their living. For whoever desires to reside in a town must know and observe the town laws, the protection of which he wishes to enjoy, no matter

whether he is a believer or at heart and in private a rogue or knave.

In the second place, after they have learned the text well, then teach them the sense also, so that they know what it means, and again choose the form of these tables, or some other brief uniform method, whichever you like, and adhere to it, and do not change a single syllable, as was just said regarding the text; and take your time to it. For it is not necessary that you take up all the parts at once, but one after the other. After they understand the First Commandment well, then take up the Second, and so on, otherwise they will be overwhelmed, so as not to be able to retain any well.

In the third place, after you have thus taught them this Short Catechism, then take up the Large Catechism, and give them also a richer and fuller knowledge. Here explain at large every

commandment, [article,] petition, and part with its various works, uses, benefits, dangers, and injuries, as you find these abundantly stated in many books written about these matters. And particularly, urge that commandment or part most which suffers the greatest neglect among your people. For instance, the Seventh Commandment, concerning stealing, must be strenuously urged among mechanics and merchants, and even farmers and servants, for among these people many kinds of dishonesty and thieving prevail. So, too, you must urge well the Fourth Commandment among the children and the common people, that they may be quiet and faithful, obedient and peaceable, and you must always adduce many examples from the Scriptures to show how God has punished or blessed such persons.

Especially should you here urge magistrates and parents to rule well and to send their children to

school, showing them why it is their duty to do this, and what a damnable sin they are committing if they do not do it. For by such neglect they overthrow and destroy both the kingdom of God and that of the world, acting as the worst enemies both of God and of men. And make it very plain to them what an awful harm they are doing if they will not help to train children to be pastors, preachers, clerks [also for other offices, with which we cannot dispense in this life], etc., and that God will punish them terribly for it. For such preaching is needed. [Verily, I do not know of any other topic that deserves to be treated as much as this.] Parents and magistrates are now sinning unspeakably in this respect. The devil, too, aims at something cruel because of these things [that he may hurl Germany into the greatest distress].

Lastly, since the tyranny of the Pope has been abolished, people are no longer willing to go to the

Sacrament and despise it [as something useless and unnecessary]. Here again urging is necessary, however, with this understanding: We are to force no one to believe, or to receive the Sacrament, nor fix any law, nor time, nor place for it, but are to preach in such a manner that of their own accord, without our law, they will urge themselves and, as it were, compel us pastors to administer the Sacrament. This is done by telling them: Whoever does not seek or desire the Sacrament at least some four times a year, it is to be feared that he despises the Sacrament and is no Christian, just as he is no Christian who does not believe or hear the Gospel; for Christ did not say, "Omit this," or, "Despise this," but, "This do you all, as often as you drink it," etc. Verily, He wants it done, and not entirely neglected and despised. "Do this you all," He says.

Now, whoever does not highly value the Sacrament thereby shows that he has no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no danger, no hell; that is, he does not believe any such things, although he is in them over head and ears and is doubly the devil's own. On the other hand, he needs no grace, life, Paradise, heaven, Christ, God, nor anything good. For if he believed that he had so much that is evil, and needed so much that is good, he would not thus neglect the Sacrament, by which such evil is remedied and so much good is bestowed. Neither will it be necessary to force him to the Sacrament by any law, but he will come running and racing of his own accord, will force himself and urge you that you must give him the Sacrament.

Hence, you must not make any law in this matter, as the Pope does. Only set forth clearly the benefit and harm, the need and use, the danger and the blessing,

connected with this Sacrament, and the people will come of themselves without your compulsion. But if they do not come, let them go and tell them that such belong to the devil as do not regard nor feel their great need and the gracious help of God. But if you do not urge this, or make a law or a bane of it, it is your fault if they despise the Sacrament. How could they be otherwise than slothful if you sleep and are silent? Therefore look to it, you pastors and preachers. Our office is now become a different thing from what it was under the Pope; it is now become serious and salutary. Accordingly, it now involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trials, and, in addition thereto, little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully. To this end may the Father of all grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks forever through Christ, our Lord! Amen.

I. The Ten Commandments

The Simple Way a Father Should Present Them to His Household

The First Commandment

You must not have other gods.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear, love, and trust God more than anything else.

The Second Commandment

You must not misuse your God's name.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will not use His name to curse, swear, cast a spell, lie or deceive,

but will use it to call upon Him, pray to Him, praise Him and thank Him in all times of trouble.

The Third Commandment

You must keep the Sabbath holy.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will not look down on preaching or God's Word, but consider it holy, listen to it willingly, and learn it.

The Fourth Commandment

You must honor your father and mother. [So that things will go well for you and you will live long on earth].

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will neither look down on our parents or superiors nor irritate them, but will honor them, serve them, obey them, love them and value them.

The Fifth Commandment

You must not kill.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will neither harm nor hurt our neighbor's body, but help him and care for him when he is ill.

The Sixth Commandment

You must not commit adultery.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that our words and actions will be clean and decent and so that everyone will love and honor their spouses.

The Seventh Commandment

You must not steal.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will neither take our neighbor's money or property, nor acquire it by fraud or by selling him poorly made products, but will help him improve and protect his property and career.

The Eighth Commandment

You must not tell lies about your neighbor.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will not deceive by lying, betraying, slandering or ruining our neighbor's reputation, but will defend him, say good things about him, and see the best side of everything he does.

The Ninth Commandment

You must not desire your neighbor's house.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will not attempt to trick our neighbor out of his inheritance or house, take it by pretending to have a right to it, etc. but help him to keep and improve it.

The Tenth Commandment

You must not desire your neighbor's wife, servant, maid, animals or anything that belongs to him.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We must fear and love God, so that we will not release his cattle, take his employees from him or seduce his wife, but urge them to stay and do what they ought to do.

The Conclusion to the Commandments

Q. What does God say to us about all these commandments?

A. This is what He says:

"I am the Lord Your God. I am a jealous God. I plague the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those who hate me with their ancestor's sin. But I make whole those who love me for a thousand generations."

Q. What does it mean?

A. God threatens to punish everyone who breaks these commandments. We should be afraid of His anger because of this and not violate such commandments. But He promises grace and all good things to those who keep such commandments. Because of this, we, too, should love Him, trust Him, and willingly do what His commandments require.

II. The Creed

The Simple Way a Father Should Present it to His Household

I. The First Article: On Creation

I believe in God the Almighty Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

Q. What does this mean?

A. I believe that God created me, along with all creatures. He gave to me: body and soul, eyes, ears and all the other parts of my body, my mind and all my senses and preserves them as well. He gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and land, wife and children, fields, animals and all I own. Every day He abundantly provides everything I need to nourish this body and life. He protects me against all

danger, shields and defends me from all evil. He does all this because of His pure, fatherly and divine goodness and His mercy, not because I've earned it or deserved it. For all of this, I must thank Him, praise Him, serve Him and obey Him. Yes, this is true!

II. The Second Article: On Redemption

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried, descended to Hell, on the third day rose again from the dead, ascended to Heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Almighty Father. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Q. What does this mean?

A. I believe that Jesus Christ is truly God, born of the Father in eternity and also truly man, born of the

Virgin Mary. He is my Lord! He redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, bought and won me from all sins, death and the authority of the Devil. It did not cost Him gold or silver, but His holy, precious blood, His innocent body -- His death! Because of this, I am His very own, will live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him righteously, innocently, and blessedly forever, just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns forever. Yes, this is true.

III. The Third Article: On Becoming Holy

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the community of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and an everlasting life. Amen.

Q. What does this mean?

A. I believe that I cannot come to my Lord Jesus Christ by my own intelligence or power. But the

Holy Spirit called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as He calls, gathers together, enlightens and makes holy the whole Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus in the one, true faith. In this Church, He generously forgives each day every sin committed by me and by every believer. On the last day, He will raise me and all the dead from the grave. He will give eternal life to me and to all who believe in Christ. Yes, this is true!

III. The Our Father

The Simple Way a Father Should Present it to His Household

I. Introduction

Our Father, Who is in Heaven.

Q. What does this mean?

A. In this introduction, God invites us to believe that He is our real Father and we are His real children, so that we will pray with trust and complete confidence, in the same way beloved children approach their beloved Father with their requests.

II. The First Request

May Your name be holy.

Q. What does this mean?

A. Of course, God's name is holy in and of itself, but by this request, we pray that He will make it holy among us, too.

Q. How does this take place?

A. When God's Word is taught clearly and purely, and when we live holy lives as God's children based upon it. Help us, Heavenly Father, to do this! But anyone who teaches and lives by something other than God's Word defiles God's name among us. Protect us from this, Heavenly Father!

III. The Second Request

Your Kingdom come.

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly God's Kingdom comes by itself, without our prayer. But we pray in this request that it come to us as well.

Q. How does this happen?

A. When the Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that we believe His holy Word by His grace and live godly lives here in this age and there in eternal life.

IV. The Third Request

May Your will be accomplished, as it is Heaven, so may it be on Earth.

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly, God's good and gracious will is accomplished without our prayer. But we pray in this request that it be accomplished among us as well.

Q. How does this happen?

A. When God destroys and interferes with every evil will and all evil advice, which will not allow God's

Kingdom to come, such as the Devil's will, the world's will, and will of our bodily desires. It also happens when God strengthens us by faith and by His Word and keeps living by them faithfully until the end of our lives. This is His will, good and full of grace.

V. The Fourth Request

Give us our daily bread today.

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly, God gives daily bread to evil people, even without our prayer. But we pray in this request that He will help us realize this and receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

Q. What does "Daily Bread" mean?

A. Everything that nourishes our body and meets its needs, such as: Food, drink, clothing, shoes, house,

yard, fields, cattle, money, possessions, a devout spouse, devout children, devout employees, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors and other things like these.

VI. The Fifth Request

And forgive our guilt, as we forgive those guilty of sinning against us.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We pray in this request that our Heavenly Father will neither pay attention to our sins nor refuse requests such as these because of our sins and because we are neither worthy nor deserve the things for which we pray. Yet He wants to give them all to us by His grace, because many times each day we sin and truly deserve only punishment. Because God does

this, we will, of course, want to forgive from our hearts and willingly do good to those who sin against us.

VII. The Sixth Request

And lead us not into temptation.

Q. What does this mean?

A. God tempts no one, of course, but we pray in this request that God will protect us and save us, so that the Devil, the world and our bodily desires will neither deceive us nor seduce us into heresy, despair or other serious shame or vice, and so that we will win and be victorious in the end, even if they attack us.

VIII. The Seventh Request

But set us free from the Evil One.

Q. What does this mean?

A. We pray in this request, as a summary, that our Father in Heaven will save us from every kind of evil that threatens body, soul, property and honor. We pray that when at last our final hour has come, He will grant us a blessed death, and, in His grace, bring us to Himself from this valley of tears.

IX. Amen.

Q. What does this mean?

A. That I should be certain that such prayers are acceptable to the Father in Heaven and will be granted, that He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way, and that He promises to answer us. Amen. Amen. This means: Yes, yes it will happen this way.

IV. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism:

The Simple Way a Father Should Present it to His Household

I.

Q. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is not just plain water, but it is water contained within God's command and united with God's Word.

Q. Which Word of God is this?

A. The one which our Lord Christ spoke in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go into all the world, teaching all heathen nations, and baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

II.

Q. What does Baptism give? What good is it?

A. It gives the forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the Devil, gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, just as God's words and promises declare.

Q. What are these words and promises of God?

A. Our Lord Christ spoke one of them in the last chapter of Mark: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; but whoever does not believe will be damned."

III.

Q. How can water do such great things?

A. Water doesn't make these things happen, of course. It is God's Word, which is with and in the

water. Because, without God's Word, the water is plain water and not baptism. But with God's Word it is a Baptism, a grace-filled water of life, a bath of new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul said to Titus in the third chapter: "Through this bath of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that we, justified by the same grace are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying."

IV.

Q. What is the meaning of such a water Baptism?

A. It means that the old Adam in us should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and die with all sins and evil lusts, and, in turn, a new person daily come forth and rise from death again. He will live forever before God in righteousness and purity.

Q. Where is this written?

A. St. Paul says to the Romans in chapter six: "We are buried with Christ through Baptism into death, so that, in the same way Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, thus also must we walk in a new life."

V. How One Should Teach the Uneducated to Confess

I.

Q. What is confession?

A. Confession has two parts:

First, a person admits his sin.

Second, a person receives absolution or forgiveness from the confessor, as if from God Himself, without doubting it, but believing firmly that his sins are forgiven by God in Heaven through it.

II.

Q. Which sins should people confess?

A. When speaking to God, we should plead guilty to all sins, even those we don't know about, just as we

do in the "Our Father," but when speaking to the confessor, only the sins we know about, which we know about and feel in our hearts.

Q. Which are these?

A. Consider here your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father? A mother? A son? A daughter? A husband? A wife? A servant? Are you disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you hurt anyone with your words or actions? Have you stolen, neglected your duty, let things go or injured someone?

VI. The Sacrament of the Altar

The Simple Way a Father Should Present it to his Household

I.

Q. What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

A. It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under bread and wine for us Christians to eat and to drink, established by Christ Himself.

II.

Q. Where is that written?

A. The holy apostles Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and St. Paul write this: “Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night on which He was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave it to His disciples and said:

'Take! Eat! This is My body, which is given for you. Do this to remember Me!' In the same way He also took the cup after supper, gave thanks, gave it to them, and said: 'Take and drink from it, all of you! This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you to forgive sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, to remember Me!' "

III.

Q. What good does this eating and drinking do?

A. These words tell us: "Given for you" and "Shed for you to forgive sins." Namely, that the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us through these words in the sacrament. Because, where sins are forgiven, there is life and salvation as well.

IV.

Q. How can physical eating and drinking do such great things?

A. Of course, eating and drinking do not do these things. These words, written here, do them: "given for you" and "shed for you to forgive sins." These words, along with physical eating and drinking, are the important part of the sacrament. Anyone who believes these words has what they say and what they record, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

V.

Q. Who, then, receives such a sacrament in a worthy way?

A. Of course, fasting and other physical preparations are excellent disciplines for the body. But anyone who believes these words, "Given for you," and

"Shed for you to forgive sins," is really worthy and well prepared. But whoever doubts or does not believe these words is not worthy and is unprepared, because the words "for you" demand a heart that fully believes.

Appendix I. How a Father Should Teach His Household to Conduct Morning and Evening Devotions.

Morning Devotions

As soon as you get out of bed in the morning, you should bless yourself with the sign of the Holy Cross and say:

> May the will of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be done! Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, say the creed and pray the Lord's Prayer. If you wish, you may then pray this little prayer as well:

> My Heavenly Father, I thank You, through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, that You kept me safe from all evil and danger last night. Save me, I pray, today as well, from every evil and sin, so that all I do and the way that I live will please you. I put myself in your care, body and soul and all that I have. Let Your holy Angels be with me, so that the evil enemy will not gain power over me. Amen.

After that, with joy go about your work and perhaps sing a song inspired by the Ten Commandments or your own thoughts.

The Evening Devotions

When you go to bed in the evening, you should bless yourself with the sign of the Holy Cross and say:

> May the will of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be done! Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, say the creed and pray the Lord's Prayer. If you wish, then you may pray this little prayer as well:

> My Heavenly Father, I thank You, through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, that You have protected me, by Your grace. Forgive, I pray, all my sins and the evil I have done. Protect me, by Your grace, tonight. I put myself in your care, body and soul and all that I have. Let Your holy angels be with me, so that the evil enemy will not gain power over me. Amen.

After this, go to sleep immediately with joy.

How a Father Should Teach His Household to say Grace and Return Thanks at Meals:

The children and servants should come to the table modestly and with folded hands and say:

> All eyes look to you, O Lord, and You give everyone food at the right time. You open Your generous hands and satisfy the hunger of all living things with what they desire.

Note:

"What they desire" means that all animals get so much to eat, that they are happy and cheerful. Because, worry and greed interferes with such desires.

After this, pray the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and these gifts, which we receive from Your generous hand, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Appendix II. Table of Duties

Consisting of Certain Passages of Scripture for Various Holy Orders and Stations, Whereby These are to be Admonished, as by a Special Lesson, Regarding Their Office and Service.

For Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers.

A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice; holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 1 Tim. 3:2ff ; Titus 1:6.

[What the Hearers Owe to Their Pastors.

Even so has the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. 9:14. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things. Gal. 6:6. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn; and the laborer is worthy of his reward." 1 Tim. 5:17. 18. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you. Heb. 13:17.]

Table of Duties

Concerning Civil Government.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For the power which exists anywhere is ordained of God. Whosoever resists the power resists the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For he bears not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Rom. 13:1–4.

[What Subjects Owe to the Magistrates.

Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. Matt. 22:21. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, etc. Wherefore you all must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. Because, for this cause pay you all tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom, to

whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honor, to whom honor. Rom. 13:1, 5ff. I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 1 Tim. 2:1f. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, etc. Titus 3:1. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him, etc. 1 Pet. 2:13f]

For Husbands.

You husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. 1 Pet. 3:7. And be not bitter against them. Col. 3:9.

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For Wives.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters you all are, as long as you all do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. 1 Pet. 3:6; Eph. 5:22.

For Parents.

You fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Eph. 6:4.

For Children.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth." Eph. 6:1–3.

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For Male and Female Servants, Hired Men, and Laborers.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. Eph. 6:5ff; Col. 3:22.

For Masters and Mistresses.

You masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him. Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1.

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For Young Persons in General.

Likewise, you younger ones, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yes, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time. 1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

For Widows.

She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusts in God, and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. 1 Tim. 5:5, 6.

For All in Common.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Herein are comprehended all the commandments. Rom. 13:8ff And persevere in prayer for all men. 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

The Small Catechism

Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household well shall fare.